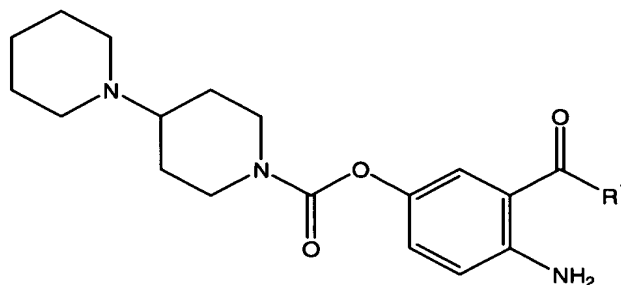
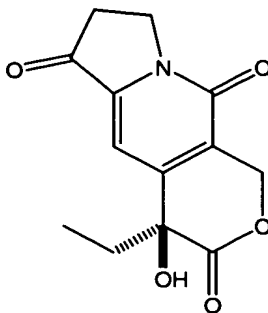


WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

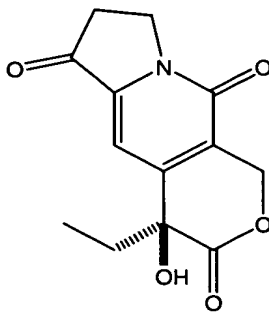
1. A compound having the formula



- or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, where R^1 is hydrogen, an alkyl, aralkyl, hydroxymethyl, carboxymethyl, acyloxymethyl or trialkylsilyl group, or a group $-CH_2NR^3R^4$ where N is a linking nitrogen atom and where (a) R^3 and R^4 are independently selected from hydrogen and alkyl, alkenyl, hydroxyalkyl and alkoxyalkyl groups; (b) R^3 is hydrogen or an alkyl, alkenyl, hydroxyalkyl or alkoxyalkyl group, and R^4 is $-COR^5$ where R^5 is hydrogen or an alkyl, alkenyl, hydroxyalkyl or alkoxyalkyl group; or (c) R^3 and R^4 taken together with the linking nitrogen atom form a saturated 3- to 7-member heterocyclic group.
2. The compound of Claim 1 where R^1 is an ethyl group.
 3. The compound of Claim 1 that is a free base form of 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate.
 4. The compound of Claim 1 that is a salt of 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate with an acid selected from hydrochloric, hydrobromic, sulfuric, methanesulfonic, phosphoric, nitric, benzoic, citric, tartaric, fumaric and maleic acids, and mono- and dicarboxylic acids of formula $CH_3-(CH_2)_n-COOH$ and $HOOC-(CH_2)_n-COOH$ where n is 0 to 4.
 5. The compound of Claim 1 that is a hydrochloride salt of 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate.
 6. A process for preparing irinotecan or a salt thereof, the process comprising a step of reacting 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate or a salt thereof with the compound having the formula



7. Irinotecan or a salt thereof prepared by the process of Claim 6.
8. A process for preparing 7-ethyl-10-hydroxycamptothecin or a salt thereof, the process comprising a first step of reacting 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate or a salt thereof with the compound having the formula



to form irinotecan or a salt thereof; and a second step of hydrolyzing the irinotecan or salt thereof in an acid medium to form 7-ethyl-10-hydroxycamptothecin or a salt thereof.

9. 7-Ethyl-10-hydroxycamptothecin or a salt thereof prepared by the process of Claim 8.
10. A process for preparing 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate, the process comprising a step of reacting 1-(4-hydroxy-2-aminophenyl)-1-propanone with 4-piperidinopiperidinecarbamyl chloride.
11. A drug substance comprising irinotecan and/or at least one salt thereof in a therapeutically effective total amount and 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate and/or at least one salt thereof in a detectable amount.
12. The drug substance of Claim 11 wherein the 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate is present in an amount not greater than about 5% by weight.

13. The drug substance of Claim 11 wherein the 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate is present in an amount not greater than about 2.5% by weight.
14. The drug substance of Claim 11 wherein the 4-amino-3-propionylphenyl-1,4'-bipiperidine-1'-carboxylate is present in an amount not greater than about 1% by weight.